

WE CLAIM:

1. An apparatus for advancing multiple rows of products to a wrapper for wrapping the products comprising:

a frame,

a plurality of product supports mounted on the frame for supporting rows of products, the product supports having an entry portion and an exit portion,

a conveyor movably mounted on the frame for each product support,

a pusher mounted on each conveyor for pushing a row of products along the associated product support toward the exit portion,

a first motor for driving at least one of the conveyors, and

a second motor for driving at least another of the conveyors, whereby said one conveyor and said another conveyor and the pushers mounted thereon can be driven independently of each other.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 in which each of said conveyors comprises an endless chain and sprockets supporting the chain.

3. The apparatus of claim 2 in which each of said motors is drivingly connected to at least one of said sprockets.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 including at least four of said product supports and four of said conveyors, each of said motors driving at least two of the conveyors.

5. The apparatus of claim 4 in which each of said conveyors comprises an endless chain and sprockets supporting the chain.

6. The apparatus of claim 5 including a first drive belt for rotating the sprockets of at least two of the conveyors and a second drive belt for rotating the sprockets of at least another two of the conveyors, the first motor driving the first drive belt and the second motor driving the second drive belt.

7. The apparatus of claim 1 in which each of the products supports comprises a trough-shaped guide tray.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 in which each of the trough-shaped guide trays is provided with a slot through which one of said pushers extends.

9. The apparatus of claim 1 in which a pair of pushers is mounted on each conveyor for pushing a row of products along the associated product support toward the exit portion.

10. The apparatus of claim 1 including a buffer conveyor movably mounted on said frame and a bar mounted on the buffer conveyor for pushing products on the product supports from the entry portions thereof toward said pushers.

11. The apparatus of claim 10 in which said buffer conveyor includes a pair of endless chains and sprockets supporting each of said endless chains, said bar being supported by each of said endless chains and extending across the product supports.

12. The apparatus of claim 11 in which one of said

sprockets for each of said endless chains is a driven sprocket, and a third motor drivingly connected to each of said driven sprockets.

13. The apparatus of claim 11 including a second bar supported by each of said endless chains and extending across the product supports for pushing products on the product supports from the entry portions thereof said toward said pushers.

14. The apparatus of claim 1 including upper and lower speed-up belts adjacent the exit portions of the product supports, and a third motor drivingly connected to the speed-up belts.

15. The apparatus of claim 1 including upper and lower speed-up belts adjacent the exit portions of the product supports, an upper driven roller and an upper idler roller rotatably mounted on the frame and supporting the upper speed-up belt, a lower driven roller and a lower idler roller rotatably mounted on the frame and supporting the lower speed-up belt, and a third motor drivingly connected to the upper and lower driven rollers.